

spite of it. Grace under pressure—that is Christine Blasey Ford.

I expressed my gratitude that I think is shared by many in America for that great teaching moment yesterday. We should honor her by acting in a way that keeps faith with her honesty and bravery.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

#### PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 2553

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 49, submitted earlier today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 49) providing for a correction in the enrollment of S. 2553.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 49) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here for my customary "Time to Wake Up" speech, but before I get into it, given the events of the day, I just want to express my satisfaction with the turn of events in the Judiciary Committee.

As the Acting President pro tempore may know, yesterday was a rather bitter day in the Judiciary Committee, with there being a lot of anger and tribal belligerence and a nominee who was full of partisanship and conspiracy theory and invective. It really was not a good day. Yet this is a funny place, and sometimes, right after we have been at our worst, something breaks that turns things in the right direction.

Something happened in the Judiciary Committee today, much due to the concerns and the fortitude of Senator FLAKE, so I want to give him primary credit. I understand the Republican leadership has agreed there will be a weeklong delay in the Kavanaugh vote on the floor and that the FBI will be given a chance to do its job and take a look at the allegations that are out there about his conduct.

This is not only a good thing for the Senate—because I think it releases a lot of pent-up pressure and anxiety and hostility—but it is also a really good thing for the process because the worst possible outcome would be that we would push this candidate through, that he would then get on the Supreme Court, and it would be subsequently shown that these allegations would have been, in fact, true and that he would not have been truthful with us about it and would have lied to the Senate. To clear as much of that cloud off of him as possible, I think, is good for us, good for the Court, good for the country—good for all. So, after a grim and battering day yesterday, I think we had a productive day today. I feel I earned my pay in the Senate over in the Judiciary Committee.

#### MISINFORMATION

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, what I want to talk about is a new form of political weapon that has emerged onto the political battlefield in America, and it is a political weapon for which the American system is not very well prepared yet. The new political weapon we see is systematic and deliberate misinformation, what you might call weaponized fake news.

Vladimir Putin's regime, in Russia, uses weaponized fake news all the time for political influence in the former Soviet Union and the modern European Union. Our intelligence agencies caught them using misinformation to help Trump win the 2016 American election. Some also is homegrown. In America, the original weaponized fake news was climate denial, spun up by the fossil fuel industry. The fossil fuel industry used systematic, deliberate disinformation to propagandize our politics and fend off accountability for its pollution of our atmosphere and oceans.

So, for both national security and political integrity reasons, we need to better understand this misinformation weaponry. Guess what. Science is on the case. A comprehensive array of peer-reviewed articles appeared last year in the Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition and, I am sure, is on the Acting President pro tempore's bedside table for light reading. Dozens of scientists contributed to this report, and I list their names in an appendix to the speech.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my appendix be added at the end of my speech.

What they found is interesting. One piece—tellingly subtitled "Under-

standing and Coping with the 'Post-Truth' Era"—describes how "the World Economic Forum ranked the spread of misinformation online as one of the 10 most significant issues facing the world"—the top 10.

"An obvious hallmark of a post-truth world is that it empowers people to choose their own reality, where facts and objective evidence are trumped by existing beliefs and prejudices," concludes one article—not a good thing.

This is not your grandfather's misinformation. This is not "JFK and Marilyn Monroe's Love Child Found in Utah Salt Mine." This is not "Aliens Abducted My Cat." This is not fun and entertainment. This is also not people just being wrong. Indeed, "misinformation in the post-truth era can no longer be considered solely an isolated failure of individual cognition that can be corrected with appropriate communications tools," they write.

In plain English, this isn't just errors; there is something bigger going on. Scientists from Duke University agreed.

"Rather than a series of isolated falsehoods, we are confronted with a growing ecosystem of misinformation."

In this ecosystem, misinformation is put to use by determined factions.

"The melange of anti-intellectual appeals, conspiratorial thinking, pseudo-scientific claims, and sheer propaganda circulating within American society seems unrelenting," write Aaron M. McCright of Michigan State and Riley E. Dunlap of Oklahoma State.

They note: "Those who seek to promote systemic lies" are "backed by influential economic interests or powerful state actors, both domestic and foreign." Let me highlight those key phrases—"systemic lies . . . backed by influential economic interests." Like I said, it is not your grandfather's misinformation.

An author from Ohio State writes that this creates artificial polarization in our politics that is not explained by our tribal social media habits. His subtitle, too, is telling: "Disinformation Campaigns are the Problem, Not Audience Fragmentation." He notes these disinformation campaigns "are used by political strategists, private interests, and foreign powers to manipulate people for political gain."

"Strategically deployed falsehoods have played an important role in shaping Americans' attitudes toward a variety of high-profile political issues," reads another article.

In a nutshell, Americans are the subjects of propaganda warfare by powerful economic interests.

So how is all of this misinformation deployed?

"The insidious fallouts from misinformation are particularly pronounced when the misinformation is packaged as a conspiracy theory," they tell us—insidious, indeed. By wrapping deliberate misinformation in conspiracy theory, the propagandist degrades the target's defenses against correction by